SECOND REPORT | FIRST SESSION | THIRTY-NINTH PARLIAMENT

Annual Review of the Budgets of the Independent Legislative Offices

Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
PROVINCE OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

DECEMBER 2009

December 10, 2009

To the Honourable
Legislative Assembly of the
Province of British Columbia

Honourable Members:

I have the honour to present herewith the Second Report of the Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services.

The Second Report covers the work of the Committee related to its annual review of the budgetary estimates of the eight independent legislative offices.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of the Committee,

John Les, MLA
Chair

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Composition of the Committee

Members

John Les, MLA	Chair	Chilliwack
Doug Donaldson, MLA	Deputy Chair	Stikine
Norm Letnick, MLA		Kelowna – Lake Country
Don McRae, MLA		Comox Valley
Michelle Mungall, MLA		Nelson – Creston
Bruce Ralston, MLA		Surrey – Whalley
Bill Routley, MLA		Cowichan Valley
John Rustad, MLA		Nechako Lakes
Jane Thornthwaite, MLA		North Vancouver – Seymour
John van Dongen, MLA		Abbotsford South

Clerk to the Committee

Craig James, Clerk Assistant and Clerk of Committees

Research Staff

Josie Schofield, Manager, Committee Research Services
Jonathan Fershau, Committee Research Analyst
Kathryn Butler, Committee Researcher

Terms of Reference

On September 14, 2009, the Legislative Assembly agreed that the Select Standing Committee on Finance Government Services be empowered:

2. a) To consider and make recommendations on the annual reports, rolling three-year service plans and budgets of the following statutory officers:

    i. Auditor General
    ii. Chief Electoral Officer
    iii. Conflict of Interest Commissioner
    iv. Information and Privacy Commissioner
    v. Merit Commissioner
    vi. Ombudsman
    vii. Police Complaint Commissioner
    viii. Representative for Children and Youth; and,

    b) To examine, inquire into and make recommendations with respect to other matters brought to the Committee's attention by any of the Officers listed in 2(a) above.

3. That the Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services be the committee referred to in sections 19, 20, 21 and 23 of the Auditor General Act and that the performance report in section 22 of the *Auditor General Act* be referred to the committee.

In addition to the powers previously conferred upon the Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services, the committee shall be empowered:

a. to appoint of their number, one or more subcommittees and to refer to such subcommittees any of the matters referred to the Committee;

b. to sit during a period in which the House is adjourned, during the recess after prorogation until the next following Session and during any sitting of the House;

c. to adjourn from place to place as may be convenient; and

d. to retain personnel as required to assist the Committee,

and shall report to the House as soon as possible, or following any adjournment, or at the next following Session, as the case may be; to deposit the original of its reports with the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly during a period of adjournment and upon resumption of the sittings of the House, the Chair shall present all reports to the Legislative Assembly.

Introduction

In British Columbia, there are eight independent legislative offices headed respectively by: the Auditor General, the Chief Electoral Officer, the Conflict of Interest Commissioner, the Information and Privacy Commissioner, the Merit Commissioner, the Ombudsperson, the Police Complaint Commissioner and the Representative for Children and Youth. On September 14, 2009, the Legislative Assembly instructed the all-party Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services (the Finance Committee) to review the officers' annual reports, rolling three-year service plans and office budgets. The Finance Committee was also asked by the House to examine, inquire into and make recommendations with respect to other matters brought to its attention by any of the officers.

The first meeting of the Finance Committee in the 39th Parliament took place on September 16, 2009. John Les, MLA was elected as the Chair and Doug Donaldson, MLA as Deputy Chair. Since only two of the ten committee members had participated in previous reviews of the offices' budgets, brief updates on developments during the past year are provided below.

Update: Joint Leasehold Accomodation Proposal

For the past six years, the Office of the Ombudsperson has provided shared services support and shared office space to the Information and Privacy Commissioner and the Police Complaint Commissioner and, for the past three years, to the Merit Commissioner.

On October 29, 2008, the previous Finance Committee adopted a motion authorizing these four independent legislative offices to enter into a binding lease for 15 years that permits consolidation in new office space during the 2010/11 fiscal year.

The construction of the LEED Gold office space at 947 Fort Street, Victoria is on schedule. The terms of the lease for this building were negotiated at slightly better rates than those approved in the fall of 2008.

Update: Budget Submission Format

At the Finance Committee meeting on December 8, 2008, a unanimous motion was passed proposing that each independent legislative office work with the Clerk Assistant and Clerk of Committees "to standardize its budget submission to achieve clarity, consistency and continuity."

A meeting was subsequently arranged for September 30, 2009 and attended by finance officials representing each of the eight offices. The following topics were discussed: purpose of meeting, budget submission format, notification process for supplemental funding requests, and the provisional timetable for budget presentations later in the fall.

The Clerk Assistant and Clerk of Committees reported that the meeting was well received. Later, it transpired that efforts were made to develop a common budget submission insofar as it could be reasonably applied to each office's operations, and that the majority of officers have adopted the new format.

Schedule of Meetings

To conduct its ninth annual review of each office's budget, the Finance Committee scheduled public meetings in Victoria on November 16, 25 and 27. Members also met in the provincial capital on December 8 for in-camera deliberations on the content of the report to be presented to the Legislative Assembly.

November 16, 2009	Merit Commissioner
November 25, 2009	Conflict of Interest Commissioner Information and Privacy Commissioner/Registrar of Lobbyists Chief Electoral Officer
November 27, 2009	Police Complaint Commissioner Ombudsperson Representative for Children and Youth Auditor General
December 8, 2009	Deliberations

Minutes and transcripts of the Finance Committee's public meetings, as well as an electronic copy of this report, are available through the parliamentary committees' website at: www.leg.bc.ca/cmt/.

Office of the Auditor General

"I think $15.4 million is enough for me to deliver the services I need to deliver based on my view of the risk and what needs to be done out there at the current time."
(John Doyle, Auditor General of British Columbia)

Background

The Office of the Auditor General (OAG) serves the people of British Columbia and their elected representatives by conducting independent audits and advising on how well the government is managing its responsibilities and resources. Vote 2 of the annual *Estimates* provides for the Office's operating expense and capital expenditures. Last year, the Finance Committee recommended that the annual operating budget be $15.536 million in each of the next three fiscal years, and the annual capital budget be set at $250,000.

2010/11 Estimate of Resources

On November 27, 2009, the Finance Committee met to review the Office's estimate of resources for next year. Appearing on behalf of the OAG were John Doyle, Auditor General; Michael Macdonell, Executive Director; and Russ Jones, Assistant Auditor General.

The Auditor General began the presentation by highlighting the three types of audit work undertaken by his Office: the annual audit of government's Summary Financial Statements, performance or value-for-money audits, and governance and accountability audits. Of these, the audit of the Summary Financial Statements is the most challenging audit done by staff. Also, the performance audit plan has been significantly curtailed by virtue of funding provided for 2009/10.

To provide context for the budget request, the Auditor General highlighted some of the internal and external challenges facing the Office. From his perspective, the OAG is under-resourced relative to legislative audit offices in other Canadian jurisdictions, as shown in Appendix A of the 2010/11 Estimate of Resources. Also, the Office continues to face a demographic challenge that drives the staff profile.

The emerging accounting and audit standards pose another significant challenge for the OAG, requiring more staff training. The Committee learned that the *Auditor General Act* requires the OAG's financial audits to comply with generally accepted auditing and assurance standards (GAAS). These standards, as well as the standards that underlie government's financial reporting (generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP)), are in the midst of an unprecedented change as Canada transitions to international financial reporting standards (IFRS) and international standards for audit (ISA). In British Columbia, government business enterprises, such as BC Hydro and BC Lotteries, will be required to transition to the new IFRS standards.

For 2010/11, the OAG anticipates being able to absorb cost increases associated with the standards transition within the existing budget envelope. However, there will be impacts on the Office's budget starting in 2011/12.

Turning to next year's operating budget, the Auditor General estimates a total appropriation of $15.40 million, $136,000 less than the current appropriation. The Office also estimates a need for only $150,000 in capital funds, $100,000 less than approved by the Finance Committee last year.

Committee Inquiry

The committee inquiry focused on the following topics: the impact of the accounting standards transition; operating budget; capital budget; and performance audits. Members also asked specific questions on legislative audit offices in other jurisdictions and professional fees.

Accounting standards transition

Members asked whether the 2011 target date for implementation of the international financial reporting standards was the same in both Canada and the United States, and whether there was any discretion to postpone British Columbia's adoption of the new standards. In addition, committee members asked the Auditor General to speculate on how much audit costs could increase as a result of adopting these new standards.

In response, the Auditor General explained that the 2011 implementation date is a Canadian target, and that OAG does not have the power to postpone the changeover. On costs, the Auditor General noted that audit costs have increased by 15 percent in jurisdictions that have adopted IFRS, such as Australia and New Zealand.

Operating budget

Another line of questioning focused on the following line items, listed on page 7 of the 2010/11 Estimate: Salaries and benefits, Travel, Information technology, Professional training.

Salaries and benefits

Some Members wondered why the OAG was requesting an increase of $139,000 for salaries and benefits for the next fiscal year, especially since the number of FTEs remains 115, and the retirement of several senior staff is imminent.

In follow-up correspondence, the OAG clarified that the Estimate of Resources was prepared using a zero-zero-zero assumption. No general, across-the-board increase to wages is planned. The increases noted reflect earned increments associated with hiring, and then retaining junior level staff as part of the Office's succession plan.

Travel

Members also inquired if the travel budget included any plan for international travel for either the Auditor General or OAG staff within the next fiscal year. The Auditor General stated that the travel budget includes both domestic travel associated with audits, as well as international travel for staff participating in professional development exchanges. He added that such international exchanges have been beneficial, as the Office has been able to both second staff at little cost, and enhance training opportunities for staff. In follow-up correspondence, the OAG provided a breakdown of the $591,000 allocated for travel expenses in the 2010/11 estimate.

Professional training

Noting the $65,000 increase for professional training, Members sought clarification on whether the training budget was primarily being used to train new employees. The Auditor General responded that there are three layers of professional training within the Office. These include career development programs for associates and chartered accountants seeking to improve their qualifications; training on changes to accounting practices; and management training.

Capital budget

Members observed that the OAG had requested $293,000 for information technology in the operating budget, and capital spending of $150,000 for the three-year computer replacement strategy and work space costs for staff. They asked the Office to indicate whether some or all of these IT expenses could be deferred to a future year.

In its written response, the OAG noted that the Office has already pared back by $100,000 the capital budget approved for planning purposes last year. The items in the capital budget relate primarily to IT server replacement and back-up hardware and software. Not replacing critical infrastructure, and then having it fail, would put the OAG in the position of having to spend more money to maintain operations.

Performance audits

Some committee members expressed concern that the Office has reduced the number of performance audits undertaken during the current fiscal year. Others asked the OAG to describe the process by which it selects audit topics.

In response, the Auditor General stated that the criterion is not the number of performance audits conducted, but rather ensuring that the selection process targets areas of assessed risk. He stressed that the Office is always seeking input, feedback and ideas for audit topics from Members, committees and the public at large. However, the Auditor General expressed concern that going forward, the Office may lack the required flexibility to examine key issues if the OAG is not provided sufficient resources to conduct the audit work outlined in its service plan.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The Finance Committee appreciates the fact that the Auditor General presented a conservative estimate of resources for 2010/11 that reflects an awareness of the financial circumstances currently facing the provincial government. As both the operating budget and capital budget are projected to be lower than the current appropriation, we endorse the OAG estimate for 2010/11.

The Finance Committee recommends that:

- the annual appropriation for the operating expense of the Office of the Auditor General be $15,400,000 in each of the next three fiscal years;

- the Office of the Auditor General receive capital expenditures of $150,000 in each of the next three fiscal years.

Office of the Conflict of Interest Commissioner

> *"The Office really has two functions, broadly. One is service in the public interest. The other is service to the Members themselves. Those two things are equally important."*
> (Paul Fraser, Q.C., Conflict of Interest Commissioner for British Columbia)

Background

The Office of the Conflict of Interest Commissioner is responsible for assisting Members of the Legislative Assembly and Cabinet Ministers in reconciling their private interests and public duties so as to act with integrity and impartiality. Vote 3 of the annual *Estimates* provides for the operating expense of the Office. Last year, the Finance Committee recommended the annual operating budget be $440,000 in each of the next three fiscal years.

Budget Proposal, 2010/11-2012/13

On November 25, 2009, the Finance Committee met to review the Office's budget proposal for the next three fiscal years. Representing the Office were the Conflict of Interest Commissioner, Paul Fraser, Q.C. and Daphne Thompson, Executive Coordinator.

The Conflict of Interest Commissioner began his presentation by outlining the Office's mandate, the vision of a paperless office, and the office structure since the recent personnel reorganization. He then reported that the Office is forecast to finish the current fiscal year within its current allocation – assuming that no major investigations will be required.

Turning to next year's operating budget, the Conflict of Interest Commissioner requested an operating budget of $487,600, representing a net increase of $47,600 (or a 11% lift). Planned reductions amounting to $50,500 would be offset by the following increases totalling $98,100: Commissioner's salary ($7,000); professional services (part-time legal research) ($30,400); information systems – operating (new electronic filing system, new records management system and new copier lease): $33,700; and building occupancy charges ($27,000).

Committee Inquiry

The committee inquiry focused on building occupancy charges and the new information systems. Members also asked specific questions about the new copier lease arrangement and office statistics.

Building occupancy charges

In response to a question about building occupancy charges, the Commissioner explained that the rent is $14,400 for the satellite office in Surrey (and $20,000 for the main office in Victoria). He also mentioned that his use of the Surrey satellite office has resulted in cost savings of $5,500 in the travel budget for this fiscal year.

Information systems

The Finance Committee sought clarification of the planned request for $38,700 in 2010/11 to finance new electronic filing and records management systems, asking if this was a capital cost or a type of operating expense. In follow-up correspondence, the Commissioner explained that "the ongoing base operating cost portion is $15,000; the one-time capital cost portion is $23,700." The breakdown of one-time capital costs is $15,000 for the electronic disclosure filing system and $8,700 for the records management system.

Members also asked the Commissioner to explain how a "hold-the-line" budget would impact the delivery of services to MLAs. The Commissioner responded that it would mean continuing to effectively export the real problem into the future, and that they would not be as timely in the delivery of services that they would like to be. He added that service delivery would improve if his Office is able to scan documents and to index and store them appropriately for retrieval.

Conclusions and Recommendations

After due consideration, the Finance Committee has decided to recommend a "hold-the-line" budget for the Office of the Conflict of Interest Commissioner. After hearing from the Commissioner, we believe he has some latitude within the existing appropriation that would accommodate changes to office operations.

The Finance Committee recommends that:

- the annual appropriation for the operating expense of the Office of the Conflict of Interest Commissioner be $440,000 in each of the next three fiscal years.

Elections BC

"As my team prepared the budget figures, we were very mindful of the fact that government funding is under tremendous pressure, that all non-essential spending is being limited, and that aggressively managing public money for maximum effectiveness is necessary. However, reducing costs and holding the line on expenses are the consistent instructions that my office has received from this Committee throughout my term."
(Harry Neufeld, Chief Electoral Officer of British Columbia)

Background

Elections BC (EBC) is a non-partisan Office of the Legislature responsible for conducting provincial general elections, by-elections and referendums and administering the initiative and recall processes, as detailed in provincial legislation. The appropriation for Elections BC operating expense and capital expenditures is provided for in Vote 4 of the annual *Estimates*.

Last year, the Finance Committee recommended that the total budget for the operating expense of EBC be $41.44 million in 2009/10, with $7.753 million allocated for ongoing costs and $33.687 million for event-related funding. For financial planning purposes, the annual operating budget was set at $7.753 million in 2010/11 and in 2011/12. Concerning capital expenditures, the Committee recommended an annual allocation of $2.86 million in the next three fiscal years.

Budget Proposal 2010/11 - 2012/13

On November 25, 2009, the Finance Committee met to review the EBC budget proposal for the next three fiscal years. Representing the Office were Harry Neufeld, Chief Electoral Officer; Linda Johnson, Deputy Chief Electoral Officer; Nola Western, Executive Director, Electoral Finance and Corporate Administration; and Anton Boegman, Executive Director, Corporate Planning and Event Management.

The Chief Electoral Officer began the presentation by providing an overview of the three separate components of the budget proposal for 2010/11: a "hold-the-line" operating budget of $7.753 million, a request for $875,000 in event-related funding and a capital budget of $1.365 million.

The Executive Director, Electoral Finance and Corporate Administration reported that cost savings are planned for certain items in the "hold-the-line" operating budget, such as salaries and benefits, office expenses and telecommunications. On the other hand, an increase of $214,000 in building occupancy charges is anticipated as EBC consolidates office space. Other projected increases in ongoing operating costs include: event readiness ($40,000); voters list maintenance ($61,000); political entity reporting ($59,000); and officer salary and benefits ($31,000).

With respect to event-related funding requirements, the Executive Director, Corporate Planning and Event Management reported that recent changes to the *Election Act* require EBC to conduct a door-to-door enumeration in advance of the 2013 general election. As it has been 20 years since the last enumeration, Elections BC requests $875,000 to prepare and conduct a pilot enumeration.

Next, the Finance Committee learned that Elections BC had "dramatically limited" its capital budget request from previous years. The Deputy Chief Electoral Officer noted that EBC would forego the purchase of a new electoral information system (EIS) database until after the 2013 general election, and maintain the existing system by upgrading obsolete system modules.

The Chief Electoral Officer concluded the Office's presentation by identifying the financial risks associated with the budget proposal, including the potential for increased building occupancy charges associated with the office consolidation project, and unanticipated costs associated with the planned procurement of information technology support. He also anticipated that the government's proposal to create a single, provincewide electoral process for local government elections by 2011 would impact office operations. To take on the role of independent supervisor, administrator and enforcer of the process would not be possible without additional resources.

Committee Inquiry

The committee inquiry focused on the following topics: the office consolidation project; the enumeration pilot project; and the electoral information system. Members also asked about the Chief Electoral Officer's future role in administering a common local government election process.

Office consolidation project

Some committee members asked why a full complement of staff was still required when no major electoral events are anticipated during the upcoming fiscal year. In addition, observing the significant increase in building occupancy charges, despite relocating to a smaller space, Members sought additional information on the post-election office consolidation project.

The Chief Electoral Officer responded that electoral events are massive undertakings and require ongoing infrastructure in order to ensure success. The Deputy Chief Electoral Officer added that the Office's core duties require a staff of 41 for maintaining operations, training of district electoral and deputy district electoral officers, and planning for future election events.

The Executive Director, Electoral Finance and Corporate Administration reported that following the closure of two satellite offices, Elections BC will have 14,614 square feet of office space – down from the current 22,000 square feet. However, as EBC headquarters at Quebec Street, Victoria cannot accommodate existing staff, the Office is attempting to renegotiate its lease to acquire additional space in the same building. The increased building occupancy charges proposed for 2010/11 are based on an estimate provided by government's Accommodation and Real Estate Services Division, which also includes a quote for leasing the warehouse space.

Enumeration pilot project

Another line of inquiry focused on the EBC plan to conduct a pilot door-to-door enumeration to prepare for implementation of section 42(1) of the *Election Act* that requires the Chief Electoral Officer to conduct enumerations of all electoral districts, by residence-to-residence visitation, before a general election. Members asked what the project's objectives are; whether other levels of government had been approached to develop a shared enumeration process; and if the projected outcome was worth the expense.

In response, the Chief Electoral Officer stated that the goals of the pilot project are: to develop and refine policies and procedures that will permit a cost-effective and comprehensive enumeration, test measures for ensuring enumerator safety, and determine the most cost-effective way to conduct a door-to-door enumeration. He informed committee members that this type of enumeration is "a very expensive proposition" and had gone out of favour across Canada, with only Manitoba and Yukon still requiring door-to-door enumerations before elections. Furthermore, as many local governments do not require a voters list, they would likely not partner with Elections BC on the legislated provincial enumeration campaign. The Chief Electoral Officer also questioned whether enumeration was the best approach give the current state of the economy, adding that the voters list was "reasonably successful" for the May 2009 election – over 82 percent of eligible voters on the list were at the right address.

On a related topic, the Chief Electoral Officer was asked why voter turnout was not included as a performance measure in the EBC *Service Plan*. After stating that he personally would not want to be measured on turnout, he felt that election management bodies need to contribute to the whole process of civic and democratic engagement by making voting accessible informing people aware of their voting rights and of the process by which they can exercise the franchise.

Electoral information system

Learning that the Office's centralized database is approaching obsolescence, Members sought additional information on what steps EBC was taking to ensure that the electoral information system continues to function. In response, the Chief Electoral Officer acknowledged that the money required to replace EIS – an estimated $12 million – was not likely to be provided. He reported that EBC has entered into preliminary discussions with Elections Canada and Elections Ontario to see if a joint solution could be developed. In the interim, the EIS is being updated module by module, which entails risk, is inconvenient, and takes time to implement.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The Finance Committee appreciates the efforts made by the Chief Electoral Officer and his staff to control ongoing operating costs. For this reason, we are confident that the adjustment to amortization we made to the "hold-the-line" budget can be accommodated. However, in these difficult economic times, some committee members are reluctant to endorse the request for $875,000 in event-related funding, regarding the pilot-door-to-door enumeration as too costly.

With regard to the capital budget, we have taken a frugal approach and reduced the amount requested for personal computer hardware and software.

The Finance Committee recommends that:

- the annual appropriation for the operating expense of Elections BC be $7,740,000 in each of the next three fiscal years;

- the capital expenditures for Elections BC be $1,298,000 in 2010/11; $1,164,000 in 2011/12; and $140,000 in 2012/13.

Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner; Office of the Lobbyists Registrar

> *"We have worked mightily to prepare what we believe is a prudent and reasonable request overall. Certainly, I fully recognize the fiscal climate in which we all find ourselves and that the responsibilities of this Committee include having regard for that fiscal climate."*
> (David Loukidelis, Information and Privacy Commissioner for British Columbia & Lobbyists Registrar)

Background

The Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner (OIPC) monitors and enforces the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (FIPPA) and the *Personal Information Protection Act* (PIPA). A separate office administers the *Lobbyists Registration Act* (LRA).

The appropriation for the two offices' operating expense and capital expenditures is provided for in Vote 5 of the annual *Estimates*. Last year, the Finance Committee recommended that the operating budget be $3.822 million in each of the next three fiscal years. The Committee also set the capital budget at $45,000 for 2009/10; $791,000 for 2010/11; and $45,000 for 2011/12.

Budget Submission, Fiscal Years 2011-2013

The Finance Committee met on November 25, 2009 to review the offices' budget submission for the next three fiscal years. In attendance were: David Loukidelis, Information and Privacy Commissioner & Lobbyists Registrar; Catherine Tully, A/Executive Director, OIPC; Mary Carlson, A/Deputy Registrar, LRA; Lanny Hubbard, Director of Corporate Services and Shelley Forrester, Director of Shared Services, Office of the Ombudsperson.

The Information and Privacy Commissioner began his presentation by outlining his Office's mandate. As an independent arm's-length enforcement agency under FIPPA and PIPA, the OIPC investigates, mediates and adjudicates freedom-of-information and privacy complaints and appeals. Complaints or appeals can be brought to the OIPC by individuals, or the Office can initiate investigations where reasonable grounds exist.

The Commissioner also serves as the Lobbyists Registrar. In this capacity, he heads a small office that is responsible for registering lobbyists; maintaining a publicly accessible on-line registry of lobbyists and information about their activities; and educating the public, lobbyists and elected officials about the requirements of the legislation and how to comply with it.

Turning to the budget submission, the Commissioner requested an operating budget of $4.725 million for fiscal 2011, representing an increase of $903,000 (or a 24% lift) over the current fiscal year. He explained that part of the additional funding is required to create the operational structure to implement the recent legislative amendments to the *Lobbyists Registration Act* (LRA), which take effect on April 1, 2010. The 2010/11 budget for the Office of the Registrar of Lobbyists is estimated to be $635,000, which includes $314,000 for three new FTE positions; and $91,000 for contract services.

For the current fiscal year, the Chair and Deputy Chair of the Finance Committee have approved an urgent request for supplemental funding of $141,000 to fund the preparatory work necessary to bring the amended Act into force on April 1, 2010.

The Commissioner also proposed, in fiscal 2011, a dedicated budget of $400,000 to meet the costs of the "significantly increased" number of judicial review proceedings brought against the OIPC. Funds not expended would be returned to the Consolidated Revenue Fund.

Turning to the capital budget, the Commissioner explained that the request for $709,000 for fiscal 2011 included a one-time increase of $664,000 to pay for the tenant improvements, furniture and IT equipment associated with the move to the new shared office space in October 2010.

Committee Inquiry

The committee inquiry focused on the LRA amendments and judicial review proceedings. Members also asked questions about response times to requests under FIPPA and PIPA.

Lobbyists Registration Act amendments

Some Members wondered why the Act does not require lobbyists to pay to register. In his response, the Commissioner referred to concerns that fees will inhibit registration and run counter to the goals of transparency and openness promoted in the lobbyists-registration legislation.

Others asked about the request for $91,000 to cover contract services. They learned that $51,000 is for ongoing support of the new on-line registration system, and $40,000 for legal services.

Judicial review proceedings

The Committee voiced concern about the increase in the number of judicial review proceedings initiated against the OIPC – from four during the last fiscal year to six so far this year. In response, the Commissioner explained six of the ten proceedings have been initiated by public bodies seeking to overturn OIPC decisions, primarily freedom-of-information orders where the Commissioner has ordered disclosure of further information by a government agency. He advised the Committee that it would be rash for him to speculate on why the number had risen. In response to further questions, the Commissioner provided a list of the judicial review proceedings for the current and previous fiscal year in follow-up correspondence.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The Finance Committee recognizes that the operating budget must increase next year to take into account the acquisition of new responsibilities related to the *Lobbyists Registration Act*. At the same time, recognizing the challenging economic times now facing the province, we have trimmed the operating budget request by $255,000.

Our revised estimate for STOB 60 (Professional Services) of $600,000 includes $300,000 in dedicated funding for judicial review proceedings, a trend the Committee finds troubling at a time when public bodies are all facing budgetary pressures. In the event that the Commissioner runs into an unforeseen situation that strains his existing budget, he should feel free to return to the Committee to explain the need for additional funding.

In the capital budget, the amount for Info. Systems, & Furniture & Equip. is revised to $15,000, an adjustment that affects the amount of capital repaid through amortization.

The Finance Committee recommends that:

- the annual appropriation for the operating expense of the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner & the Office of the Lobbyists Registrar together be $4,470,000 in each of the next three fiscal years;

- the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner & the Office of the Lobbyists Registrar together receive capital expenditures of $574,000 in 2010/11; $45,000 in 2011/12; and $45,000 in 2012/13.

Office of the Merit Commissioner

"This budget request to the Committee is mindful that government delivers services from a limited public purse. For the coming fiscal year, I have reduced operating costs in the areas of travel, central management support services, and office and business expenses."
(Joy Illington, outgoing Merit Commissioner for the Province of British Columbia)

Background

The mandate of the Office of the Merit Commissioner (OMC) is to provide independent oversight and insight into merit-based hiring in the B.C. public service. The appropriation for the Office is provided under Vote 6 of the annual *Estimates*. Last year, the Finance Committee recommended the annual operating budget be $955,000 in each of the next three fiscal years, and set the capital budget at $15,000 for 2009/10; $235,000 in 2010/11; and $15,000 in 2011/12.

The province's first independent Merit Commissioner, Joy Illington, served from May 2006 until May 2009 and has opted not to seek a second term. Pending the selection of her successor, Ms. Illington stayed on as Acting Merit Commissioner until November 4. She then continued on solely in an administrative-caretaker role, through leave of the House, to assist the transition.

Service Plan, 2010/11-2012/13

On November 16, 2009, the Finance Committee met to review the OMC service plan and budget submission for the next three fiscal years. In attendance were Joy Illington, acting for the OMC through leave of the House; Lanny Hubbard, Executive Director of Corporate Services and Shelley Forrester, Director of Shared Services, Office of the Ombudsperson.

The outgoing Merit Commissioner presented a brief overview of her Office's oversight work for the benefit of new committee members. The OMC conducts annual audits of new appointments, special audits of categories of appointments, independent staffing reviews, focus groups and surveys; analyzes the annual Work Environment Survey administered by the B.C. Public Service Agency; engages in outreach about the value of merit; and issues an annual report.

Next, the Finance Committee was updated on progress on key commitments. Members learned that the Office is on track for the 2009 annual audit. The special audit for 2008/09 of temporary short-term appointments has concluded its first phase; and the planning of a special audit of low-merit results in the Work Environment Survey is underway. This year, the OMC has looked at how other organizations, including the Ontario Public Service, have increased the diversity of people, skills and ideas, while upholding merit. Staffing reviews in 2009/10 are fewer than in previous years, but the number of informal complaints has never been higher.

The outgoing Commissioner then identified the Office's priorities for fiscal 2010/11. First, the annual audit program will have to change its focus from individual competitions to accommodate the move to a centralized hiring model, involving prequalified pools of candidates. A Hiring Centre has been established within the B.C. Public Service Agency, which is staffed by HR professionals who will recruit, assess and prequalify candidates and then refer them to the manager of the position to decide who to hire. Promotions will also be managed centrally.

Other priorities for fiscal 2011 are the special audit of low-merit results, the first to be undertaken of appointments by job classification; and a survey of employees to determine their awareness of the staffing review process and attitudes about the use of it.

Budget Submission Fiscal Years 2011 - 2013

Turning to the budget submission, the outgoing Merit Commissioner stated that the request presented to the Finance Committee is mindful that government delivers services from a limited public purse. Overall, there is a small net increase in the operating budget for fiscal 2011 of $23,000 that reflects a higher rent for more workspace. In addition, a one-year increase in the capital budget of $204,000 is required to pay for tenant improvements, information systems and furniture purchases, costs related to the move to the new shared office space at 947 Fort Street, Victoria.

Committee Inquiry

The committee inquiry focused on the OMC *Service Plan* and, in particular, the application of the merit principle and the special audits. With respect to the budget, Members asked questions about STOB 50 (Salaries), STOB 54 (Officer of the Leg Salary) and STOB 75 (Building occupancy).

Merit principle application

Some committee members inquired whether the criteria related to the merit principle were flexible enough to recruit a diverse workforce. In response, the outgoing Commissioner explained that the *Public Service Act* sets out a number of factors that must be considered in determining merit. These include the applicant's education, skills, knowledge, experience, past work performance and years of continuous service in the public service. She also noted that the Commissioner has no authority to reverse a hiring decision that may violate the merit principle.

On a related topic, the outgoing Commissioner was asked for her opinion on the desirability of the government's move to a centralized hiring model. She replied that she was "supportive" of the new process, noting that it will eliminate non-merit-based hiring resulting from a lack of knowledge on the part of a manager. Centralized hiring will also provide some distance between managers and those they hire, thereby reducing the perception of favouritism in some work units.

Special audits

Regarding the 2008/09 special audit, some committee members voiced concern about its finding that 21 percent of temporary short-term appointments have been renewed multiple times. In response, the outgoing Commissioner explained that a great many of the renewals of appointments of less than seven months are not for auxiliary employees necessarily, but for managers who are "careless" and not sufficiently organized to be running competitions.

Other questions focused on the 2009/10 special audit targeting the low-merit results in the Work Environment Survey among the job classification of conservation officers, sheriffs and correctional officers. The Committee learned that among these employees consistently more than 50 percent have disagreed that merit is the basis on which positions are filled in their work units. In response to a specific question regarding union involvement in the audit, the outgoing Commissioner explained that the audit results would be shared with the union and management.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The Finance Committee would like to express its sincere appreciation to Joy Illington for her contributions during her term as the first independent Merit Commissioner. Her previous career with the B.C. Public Service has also been quite outstanding, by all standards. On behalf of all MLAs and the public, we thank Joy and wish her well in her future endeavours.

We also appreciate the efforts made by the Office of the Merit Commissioner to control its ongoing operating costs. For this reason, we are confident that the very minor adjustment made to the "hold-the-line" budget, in regard to amortization expense, can be accommodated.

Regarding the capital budget, we have revised the amount for Info. Systems, & Furniture & Equip. to $8,000, an adjustment that affects the amount of capital repaid via amortization.

The Finance Committee recommends that:

- the annual appropriation for the operating expense of the Office of the Merit Commissioner be $965,000 in each of the next three fiscal years;

- the Office of the Merit Commissioner receive capital expenditures of $152,000 in 2010/11; $15,000 in 2011/12; and $15,000 in 2012/13.

Office of the Ombudsperson

"The budget submission has been prepared after careful analysis of the resources required to deal with the continuing increase in demand for services in a situation of fiscal constraint."
(Kim Carter, Ombudsperson for the Province of British Columbia)

Background

The title of the Ombudsman was changed to the Ombudsperson on October 29, 2009, when the *Ombudsman Amendment Act, 2009* received Royal Assent. Like its predecessor, the Office of the Ombudsperson has two core business areas: investigation of individual complaints about administrative fairness, and general oversight of the administrative actions of 2,800 public bodies.

The appropriation for the Office's operating expense and capital expenditures is provided for in Vote 7 of the annual *Estimates.* Last year, the Finance Committee recommended that the annual operating budget be $4.773 million in each of the next three fiscal years, and that annual capital expenditures be $75,000 in 2009/10; $1.14 million in 2010/11; and $75,000 in 2011/12.

Budget Submission, Fiscal Years 2011 – 2013

On November 27, 2009, the Finance Committee met to review the Office's budget submission for the next three fiscal years. Representing the Office were Kim Carter, Ombudsperson; Lanny Hubbard, Director of Corporate Services; and Shelley Forrester, Director of Shared Services.

The Ombudsperson began her presentation by noting that the change in her title coincided with the 30th anniversary of the position in British Columbia. Under the office mandate, the Ombudsperson can investigate complaints about any matter of administration that involves a public agency within the wide jurisdiction of the Office. The Office works with almost all the legislation and regulation in B.C., together with policy guidelines, procedures and practices, both written and unwritten.

The Ombudsperson reported that the number of inquiries has risen from 1,697 in 2006 to over 2,800 this year. In her opinion, reducing the waitlist will require hiring additional staff.

Turning to the details of this year's budget submission, the Ombudsperson requested an increase in funds totalling $854,000 (or an 18% lift). The breakdown of additional resources is: $517,000 to cover six additional positions in investigations for fiscal 2011; $267,000 increase in building occupancy charges related to the move to the new building; and a $70,000 increase in amortization expense.

The Office's capital budget of $921,000 in fiscal 2011 includes a one-time increase to pay for the tenant improvements ($721,000) and furniture and IT equipment ($200,000) associated with the move to the new shared office space at 947 Fort Street, Victoria.

Committee Inquiry

The committee inquiry focused on the size of the office caseload and the proposed increase in the operating budget.

Office caseload

The Committee was interested to learn what 'preventative measures' the Office could implement in order to reduce the number of inquiries and complaints it receives. The Ombudsperson believes there are areas where some good work could be done, including local government.

The benefits of providing training materials for new MLAs and constituency assistants were also discussed. Committee members learned that the Office sends out binders to all constituency offices that describe the work of the Ombudsperson, and provide contacts for other organizations.

Operating budget

Some committee members voiced concern that the Ombudsperson was requesting an 18 percent lift in the operating budget and a 22 percent increase in the number of full-time-equivalents (from 32 to 39) at a time when the government is facing significant budget challenges. They asked what the impact would be of a baseline or a flat budget on the operation of the Office next year. In response, the Ombudsperson reported that a flatlined budget would mean the loss of the two temporary investigative positions currently funded through sales of the Case Tracker System.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The Finance Committee recognizes the workload pressures facing the Office of the Ombudsperson. However, in this challenging economic environment, we cannot support an increase in the full-time-equivalent (FTE) count. We have reduced the proposed estimates for salaries by $517,000 and employee benefits by $129,000. In the capital budget, we have revised the amount for Info. Systems, Furniture & Equip. to $20,000, an adjustment that affects the amount of capital repaid via amortization.

The Finance Committee recommends that:

- the annual appropriation for the operating expense of the Office of the Ombudsperson be $4,945,000 in each of the next three fiscal years;

- the Office of the Ombudsperson receive capital expenditures of $741,000 in 2010/11; $75,000 in 2011/12; and $75,000 in 2012/13.

Office of the Police Complaint Commissioner

"Our appearance before the Committee could not have come at a more crucial time for ensuring successful implementation of the Police Amendment Act, 2009. It also could not have come at a worse time, when considering the current state of our national economy."
(Stan Lowe, Police Complaint Commissioner for British Columbia)

Background

The Office of the Police Complaint Commissioner (OPCC) is an independent office of the Legislature, established under Part 9 of the *Police Act*, to ensure that public complaints involving municipal police in British Columbia are handled professionally, thoroughly, impartially and ethically. The appropriation for the Office's operating expense and capital expenditures is provided for in Vote 8 of the annual *Estimates*. Last year, the Finance Committee recommended that the OPCC operating budget be $1.974 million in each of the next three fiscal years, and that its capital budget be $25,000 in 2009/10; $400,000 in 2010/11; and $25,000 in 2011/12.

Budget Submission Fiscal Years 2011-2013

On November 27, 2009, the Finance Committee met to review the OPCC budget submission of for the next three fiscal years. Representing the Office were Stan Lowe, the Police Complaint Commissioner; Bruce Brown, Deputy Commissioner; Lanny Hubbard, Director of Corporate Services and Shelley Forrester, Director of Shared Services, Office of the Ombudsperson.

The Police Complaint Commissioner began his presentation with an overview of the OPCC mandate, statement of purpose, and statement of principles, as outlined in the *Service Plan*. The four fundamental principles, under which the Office operates, are: fairness, independent oversight, a principled approach and a commitment to excellence. The Commissioner then provided a brief synopsis of the Office's four goals and associated performance measures.

Turning to the budget submission, the Police Complaint Commissioner requested approval for an operating budget of $3.114 million and a capital budget of $557,000. The Commissioner explained that the proposed $1.140 million increase (or an 58% lift) in the operating budget was primarily due to the expanded mandate arising from the passage of Bill 7 on October 27, which made significant legislative amendments to the *Police Act*.

The Commissioner explained that his Office lacks the capacity to absorb the anticipated increase in the caseload prompted by the legislative changes. Five additional investigative analyst positions are requested for 2010/11, with one of these positions already funded through a reallocation of the existing budget. These investigators would handle the projected increase in the caseload within the new statutory timelines related to the move from after-the-fact review to a model of contemporaneous oversight.

An additional $400,000 in dedicated funding under STOB 60 (Professional Services) is also requested for public hearings and associated legal costs that are expected to increase significantly in fiscal 2011. As in past years, the OPCC will return the funds not expended during the fiscal year to the Consolidated Revenue Fund.

In addition, the capital budget of $557,000 includes a one-time increase to pay for tenant improvements, furniture and IT equipment related to the move to the new shared office space.

Committee Inquiry

The committee inquiry focused on the *Police Act* amendments and the capital budget request. Members also asked specific questions about public outreach; the complaint review process; the Stl'atl'imx Tribal Police Service; and trends in police complaints.

Police Act amendments

Several Members requested additional information on the potential implications the recent amendments to the *Police Act* will have on the Commissioner's powers and office workload. In particular, they asked the Commissioner to comment on the contemporaneous oversight process envisioned in the *Act*, the proportion of the operating budget increase pertaining to the *Police Act* amendments and the degree of urgency associated with the operational funding lift.

Contemporaneous oversight process

Noting that the primary responsibility for investigating complaints rests with the professional standards units of the various municipal police forces, committee members asked the Commissioner whether proper protocols for contemporaneous oversight have been established to ensure effective oversight of investigations conducted by police forces without duplicating investigative effort, or creating tensions between civilian and police investigative units.

In response, the Police Complaint Commissioner stated that he philosophically agreed that the primary investigating unit should be the professional standards section of a detachment. While the OPCC will not be directing or conducting investigations, his Office plans to be "on top of matters" to improve the quality of investigations, but not to direct the police. The Commissioner added that he sees the investigative/oversight relationship as being essentially a collaborative one.

On a related topic, the Commissioner was asked if his advice is being sought on how to incorporate the RCMP's complaint process into British Columbia's police complaint process. He responded by saying that his Office does not have the jurisdiction over the handling of complaints against the RCMP. Also, the decision to develop a single complaints process for all police forces operating in the province rests with both the federal and provincial governments.

Operating budget

In response to Members' questions, the Commissioner explained that $1.1 million of the requested increase in the operating budget was attributable to recent changes made to the *Police Act*. The specific expenses are: $447,000 to develop increased investigative capacity within the Office, including the hiring of up to five new investigative analysts; $400,000 in additional funding for hearings and related legal work to meet the anticipated increase in public hearing resulting from the legislative changes; $136,000 for increased space costs associated with the move to the new building; $100,000 for professional services; and $25,000 for travel costs related to the increased staffing level.

The Commissioner informed the Finance Committee that the estimated cost of implementing the *Police Act* amendments is conservative and perhaps underestimates the needs of the Office. Further, he maintained that without requested funding, the success of the legislative amendments may be in jeopardy. From his perspective, funding of the implementation stage "sets the tone for the process amongst all the stakeholders," thus it was important to get started on the right track.

Capital budget

Some committee members sought additional clarification on the items within the capital budget. In response, the Director of Corporate Services stated that a large component of the capital budget was for developing videoconference capability within the new shared facility. Additional capital expenditures for computers and furniture would also be required if five investigative analysts were hired during the upcoming fiscal year. He also reported that the capital funding was not being used to purchase new office furniture and equipment for the move to the new building.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The Finance Committee recognizes that the OPCC budget must increase next year to take into account the acquisition of new responsibilities related to the changes to the *Police Act*. At the same time, in view of the budget pressures facing the province and the current uncertainty regarding the projected size of the caseload, we have tried to develop a more realistic estimate of the resources needed for implementation.

After much deliberation, the Committee has agreed to recommend an increase of $483,000 (or a 24% lift) in next year's operating budget that will provide for the hiring of three additional analysts. If there is a significant increase in the number of complaints received by the office, we encourage the Commissioner to return to the Committee to explain how the legislation is actually working and why additional funding is needed.

Regarding the capital budget, we have revised the amount for Info. Systems, & Furniture & Equip. to $25,000, an adjustment that affects the amount of capital repaid through amortization. Tenant Improvements have also been adjusted to $300,000 in line with the scaling back of staffing needs from 15 to 13 FTEs.

The Finance Committee recommends that:

- the annual appropriation for the operating expense of the Office of the Police Complaint Commissioner be $2,457,000 in each of the next three fiscal years;

- the Office of the Police Complaint Commissioner receive capital expenditures of $325,000 in 2010/11; $25,000 in 2011/12; and $25,000 in 2012/13.

Office of the Representative for Children and Youth

> *"The Committee will note that given the current economic conditions and the pressures faced by government — and I'm sure the worries and concerns of committee members — I plan to operate the office next year within the current allocation of $7.027 million. I'm not requesting an increase to the operating budget. Frankly, a stand-pat budget does represent a bit of a reduction for my office, in some ways, but I do understand the extremely challenging economic circumstances."*
> (Mary Ellen Turpel-Lafond, Representative for Children and Youth, Province of British Columbia)

Background

The Office of the Representative for Children and Youth (ORCY) is the independent legislative office that supports children, youth and families who need help in dealing with the child welfare system and advocates for changes to the system itself. The functions of the Representative and here Office are set out in section 6 of the *Representative for Children and Youth Act.*

The appropriation for the Office's operating expense and capital expenditures is provided for in Vote 9 of the annual *Estimates.* Last year, the Finance Committee recommended that the ORCY operating budget be $7.027 million for the next three fiscal years, and its capital budget be $130,000 in 2009/10 and $30,000 in each of the next two fiscal years.

Budget Submission, Fiscal 2010/11 – 2012/13

On November 27, 2009, the Finance Committee met to review the budget submission of the Office of the Representative for Children and Youth for the next three fiscal years. Presenting on behalf of the Office were Mary Ellen Turpel-Lafond, the Representative for Children and Youth; Jeremy Berland, Deputy Representative for Children and Youth; and Tanis McNally-Dawes, Manager, Finance and Facilities.

The Representative for Children and Youth began her presentation by providing an overview of the work of the Office since its establishment in 2007. The three core business areas are: to review, investigate and report on the critical injuries and deaths of children; to increase the accountability of ministries and other public bodies by monitoring, reviewing and auditing the provision of designated services; and to support, assist and inform children and their families respecting designated services.

With respect to work conducted during the current fiscal year, the Representative updated the Committee on the number of child death and critical injury reviews conducted by the Office. It was noted that as of September 2009, 179 critical injury and 89 death reviews had been opened, with 34 reviews completed and another 30 reviews underway.

On the monitoring, reviewing and auditing of designated services, several reports are imminent including: a joint report with the Ombudsperson on complaints process for children and youth; a review of services for children and youth with special needs; a report on the sexual abuse intervention program; an audit of the children in the home of relative program; and an update on the implementation of the Hughes review recommendations.

The Finance Committee also learned that the Office had opened 3,750 new advocacy cases between April 2007 and October 2009, with approximately half of the cases relating to services delivered by the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD). Noting the significant recent increase in advocacy work, the Representative reported that ORCY had undertaken a concerted effort to reach out to children and youth in B.C.'s remote communities.

With respect to the budget submission, the Representative of Children and Youth indicated that her Office is prepared to work under its current operating budget of $7.027 million. For next year's "hold-the-line" budget, the Office plans to reduce the budget for employee salaries and for travel, and to eliminate its advertising and publications budget. These planned reductions are offset by an increase of $149,000 in STOB 60 (Professional services), and other line items.

The Office's capital budget proposed a one-time increase of $100,000 for tenant improvements during 2010/11.

Committee Inquiry

The Committee's inquiry focused on matters related to the office mandate and the capital budget. Members asked specific questions about the variance between the forecast and actual budget for fiscal 2009; STOB 50 (Salaries of employees); STOB 57 (Travel); and STOB 77 (Grants).

Office mandate

Some Members sought clarification on the Office's relationship with the Child Death Review Unit of the B.C. Coroners Service. The Representative responded that the Office has very good protocols in place with the Coroners Service that reviews all child deaths in the province.

Another theme of the committee inquiry focused on the Office's advocacy work. Noting the significant increase in advocacy services provided by the Office, some Members asked whether ORCY had contemplated a review of services provided in order to assess and improve the Office's performance in this area. In particular, Members inquired whether ORCY has developed a strategy to increase the level of awareness of the advocacy services provided by the Office.

The Representative responded that a survey of individuals who have sought advocacy services is currently being planned, with the report to be distributed to the Select Standing Committee on Children and Youth. With respect to expanding the public's awareness of the Office, one strategy under consideration by the Representative is to require MCFD to provide automatic notification of the advocacy services provided by ORCY to every child in care. The Representative noted that such automatic notification is required in other provinces such as Alberta.

On a related topic, the Representative was asked for her views on the adequacy of different measures of child poverty used in British Columbia and other parts of Canada.

Capital budget

Committee members inquired whether the $100,000 proposed for tenant improvements in the capital budget may be able to be deferred for another year. In response, the Deputy Representative explained that the Victoria office was facing a significant space shortage, particularly for the storage of confidential files. The improvements could be deferred; however, the adequacy of security arrangements would have to be addressed in the future.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The Finance Committee appreciates the fact that the Representative for Children and Youth presented a "very fiscally responsible"budget submission for 2010/11 that reflects an awareness of the challenges currently facing the province. Accordingly, we are endorsing the Office's "hold-the-line" operating budget with an adjustment in amortization. For the capital budget, we are recommending that the proposed tenant improvements be deferred until fiscal 2012, which we understand to be a manageable delay from the Office's perspective.

The Finance Committee recommends that:

- the annual appropriation for the operating expense of the Office of the Representative for Children and Youth be $6,973,000 in each of the next three fiscal years;

- the Office of the Representative for Children and Youth receive capital expenditures of $30,000 in 2010/11; $130,000 in 2011/12; and $30,000 in 2012/13.

Documents Submitted

Office of the Auditor General

2010/11 Estimate of Resources, November 2009

Correspondence from Michael Macdonnell to Craig James, December 4, 2009

Office of the Conflict of Interest Commissioner

Background Information re Budget Proposal, 2010/11- 2012/13

Budget Proposal, 2010/11- 2012/13

Correspondence from Paul Fraser, Q.C., Commissioner to Members of the Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services, December 1, 2009

Elections BC

Annual Report 2008 – 2009

Service Plan 2009/10 – 2011/12

Budget Proposal 2010/11 – 2012/13

Correspondence from Nola Western, Elections BC to James Craig and Josie Schofield, November 25, 2009

Ministry of Community and Rural Development, Information Bulletin, "Province to Form Local Government Election Task Force," October 2, 2009

Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner & Office of the Lobbyists Registrar

Service Plan Fiscal Years 2011-2013, Presented to the Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services, Legislative Assembly of B.C., November 25, 2009

Budget Submission Fiscal Years 2011-2013, Presented to Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services, Legislative Assembly of B.C., November 25, 2009

Correspondence from David Loukidelis, Information and Privacy Commissioner for British Columbia to Craig James, Clerk Assistant and Clerk of Committees, November 25, 2009

Correspondence from John Les, MLA, Chair and Doug Donaldson, MLA, Deputy Chair, Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services to Hon. Colin Hansen, Minister of Finance, November 18, 2009

Correspondence from David Loukidelis, Information and Privacy Commissioner for British Columbia and Registrar of Lobbyists to John Les MLA, Chair, Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services, October 5, 2009 and October 27, 2009

Office of the Merit Commissioner

Service Plan 2010/11 – 2012/13, Presented to the Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services, Legislative Assembly of B.C., November 16, 2009

Budget Submission Fiscal Years 2011- 2013, Presented to Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services, Legislative Assembly of B.C., November 16, 2009

Office of the Ombudsperson

Service Plan Fiscal Years 2011 – 2013

Budget Submission Fiscal Years 2011 – 2013, Presented to the Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services, Legislative Assembly of B.C., November 27, 2009

Correspondence from Kim Carter, Ombudsperson, Province of British Columbia, to Mr. John Les, MLA, Chair, Select Standing Committee on Finance & Government Services, November 30, 2009

Office of the Police Complaint Commissioner

Service Plan Fiscal Years 2011 – 2013, Presented to the Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services, Legislative Assembly of B.C., November 27, 2009

Budget Submission Fiscal Years 2011 – 2013, Presented to the Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services, Legislative Assembly of B.C., November 27, 2009

Office of the Representative for Children and Youth

Annual Report April 1, 2008 – March 31, 2009

Service Plan 2010/11 to 2012/13

Budget Submission Fiscal 2010/11 - 2012/13, Presented to the Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services, Legislative Assembly of B.C., November 27, 2009